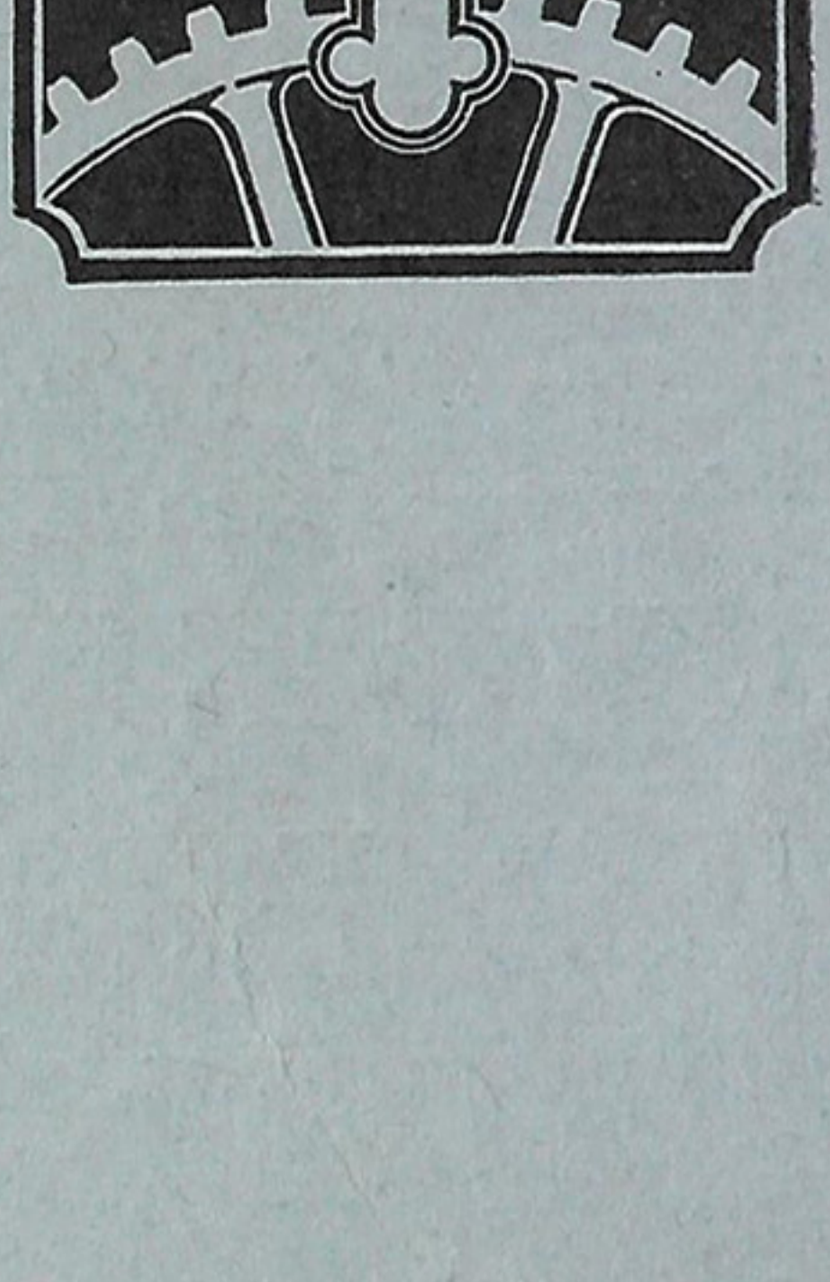
# LABOR SUNDAY

# MESSAGE

## 1931



INDUSTRIAL FELLOWSHIP
*of the*
EPISCOPAL CHURCH
CHURCH MISSIONS HOUSE
281 FOURTH AVENUE NEW YORK, N. Y.

# LABOR SUNDAY MESSAGE
## 1931

We face, this winter, the third successive year of unemployment. We face an industrial crisis more far-reaching than any in the life of this nation. We face distress, destitution, and utter despair among a vast number of our working men and women.

The volume of unemployment is great and is increasing. Today six millions of our fellow citizens are wholly unemployed, and as many more are only partially employed. Due to the slackness in general business it is estimated that we shall have another million of workers involuntarily idle this coming winter.

We, as a people, have made inadequate preparations for these critical days that lie ahead. In the majority of cases the unemployed have exhausted all their savings and most of their credits. Private charitable relief in many communities is wholly inadequate for the demands, and in still other municipalities the limit of borrowing capacity has been reached. Thus, on the one hand we find men eager and willing to work, with idle capital and equipment awaiting employment, and vast stores of goods awaiting consumers; and on the other hand, men and women in dire want. We have poverty in the presence of plenty. We have complete paralysis where we need action to bring these groups into correlated activity.

We cannot permit so grievous a social malady to continue in our body politic. The human costs of unemployment, such as the demoralization of family standards, the under-nourishment of children, the increase in mental disease,

the greatly accentuated trend to crime, taken together constitute a searching indictment of man's incapacity to control, if not prevent, such a disease. But more important, we cannot condone a social order which makes such distress possible. We cannot truly love our neighbors and permit them to suffer so grievously from a malady they can neither avert nor alter.

Our Christian duty is clear—to strive, without ceasing, to bring every facility of private and public aid within the reach of those who are involuntarily idle, so that they may not involuntarily starve; to pray for a deepening of the spiritual life of the Church so that its external effort may be equal to the power of its internal light; to study under the guidance of the Holy Spirit the causes of these economic depressions and the most effective plans for their prevention; to join with other men and women of good will to transform our social order into a more ethical and Christian type of society through Jesus' way of love.

# PRAYERS

## For Those in Need Through Unemployment

*O Almighty God, who hast blessed the earth with all that is needful for the life of man, give thy help and comfort to all who are in need and especially to those our brethren who are now suffering through unemployment; stir us to do our part for their aid and relief; help us to realize our responsibility for the injustices of our social and industrial life; fill us with the desire to purify our civilization and make it truly Christian that we may be delivered from the evils alike of grinding poverty and of excessive riches; lead us into the paths of simple and upright living; take from us the spirit of covetousness and give us the spirit of service; show*

*us the way so to order our life as a nation that, receiving the just reward of honest labor, none may want, but each according to his need may share in thy bountiful provision.*

*We ask this in the Name of him who came into this world to show us the way of justice and brotherhood and love, thy Son, Christ our Lord. Amen.*

## For the Fellowship

*O Lord Jesus Christ, who didst glorify labor by thy Life of toil, bless, we beseech thee, the efforts of this Fellowship, that we may rejoice to work with thee, and may also strive to open to all our brothers and sisters the way to honest labor, and secure for them the fruits of their toil: and further we beseech thee, that the employers of labor may fashion their dealings with their employees, according to justice, thus leading us all to thy kingdom, toward which thou hast pointed us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

## For Those in Industry

*O Lord, who in the gift of thine only Son hast encouraged struggling mankind, grant that the labor movement may be wisely guided into a greater vision of usefulness, that employers of labor may fashion their dealings according to justice, and that the way of those in industry may lead to that kingdom toward which thou hast pointed us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

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